

# Colorado Recreation Resource Advisory Committee



PRESENTATION TO  
THE NORTH WEST BLM COLORADO RESOURCE  
ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING  
DEC. 1, 2011  
GATEWAY, CO

# Recreation Enhancement Act (REA)



- **Enacted in 2004**
- **10-year authority**
- **Secretary creates advisory committees**
- **Advisory committees review fees**

# Colorado Recreation RAC (RRAC)



- **Purpose to provide fee recommendations**
- **Citizens advisory committee**
- **Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA)**
- **BLM can share RRAC with Forest Service**
- **11 members from legislated interest groups**
- **RRAC & RACs have different appointing authority, scope, & organization**

# Recreation RAC Does...



**Make recommendations on:**

- **Standard Amenity Fees**
- **Expanded Amenity Fees**
- **Special Recreation Permit Fees (Individual permits for special areas)**

# Standard Amenity Fee



- National Conservation Area;
  - Visitor or interpretive center with services; or
  - An area with:
    - Significant opportunities for outdoor recreation;
    - Substantial federal investments;
    - Efficient fee collection opportunities; and
- |                   |                           |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Developed parking | Permanent toilet facility |
| Trash collection  | Interpretive signs        |
| Picnic tables     | Security services         |

# Expanded Amenity Fee

Any 1 of:

- Built up boat launches
- Cabins, shelters, boats, stock animals, historic structures...
- RV Hookups
- Sanitary dump stations
- Robust interpretive sites
- Reservation services
- Transportation services
- Staffed first-aid services

- Developed campgrounds with at least 5 of:

Tent or trailer spaces—Picnic tables—Access roads—BLM fee collection—Visitor protection—Drinking water—Refuse containers—Toilet facilities—Campfire containment

- Developed swimming sites with at least 4 of:

Bathhouses—Trash bins—Lifeguards—Picnic Tables—Swimming area—Paved parking—Swimming deck

# Special Recreation Permit Fees



- **Permits issued for non-commercial, individual or group use of special areas**

# Recreation RAC Does Not...



**Make recommendations on:**

- **Concession sites**
- **Commercial permits (outfitting)**
- **Special recreation permits for organized group activities (Burning Man) and events (races).**

# Colorado Fee Review Status



- **RRAC Charter expired in 2009**
- **RRAC has not held a meeting since 2009**
- **Proposals in limbo**
- **Potential loss of \$\$\$ for projects**
- **Potential resource harm**

# Colorado Fee Review Status



- 4(d)(1)(D) **USE OF OTHER ENTITIES.**--In lieu of establishing a Recreation Resource Advisory Committee under subparagraph (A), the Secretary may use a Resource Advisory Committee established pursuant to another provision of law and in accordance with that law or a recreation fee advisory board otherwise established by the Secretary to perform the duties specified in paragraph (2)

# Interim RAC Authority for Colorado



- **RACs passed unanimous resolutions to do RRAC duties for 1 year**
- **BLM informed Forest Service our RACs will review BLM fee proposals for 1 year**
- **REA permits RAC use**
- **RACs will use their charters to guide reviews**

# BLM RAC Personnel



## **BLM Designated Federal Official**

- District Manager

## **BLM RAC Coordinator**

- Public Affairs Officer

## **State Office coordination**

- State Director (Social & Cultural Resources)

## **Field Office proponent**

- Field Manager (Recreation lead)

# RAC Fee Review Process



- 1. Field Office develops proposal**
- 2. Field Office seeks public input**
- 3. Field Office presents to State Director**
- 4. Washington reviews**
- 5. BLM forwards to RAC**
- 6. RAC Coordinator Posts Notice in FRN and Local Paper at least one week prior to meeting**
- 7. RAC reviews and recommends**
- 8. BLM implements, modifies, or withdraws**

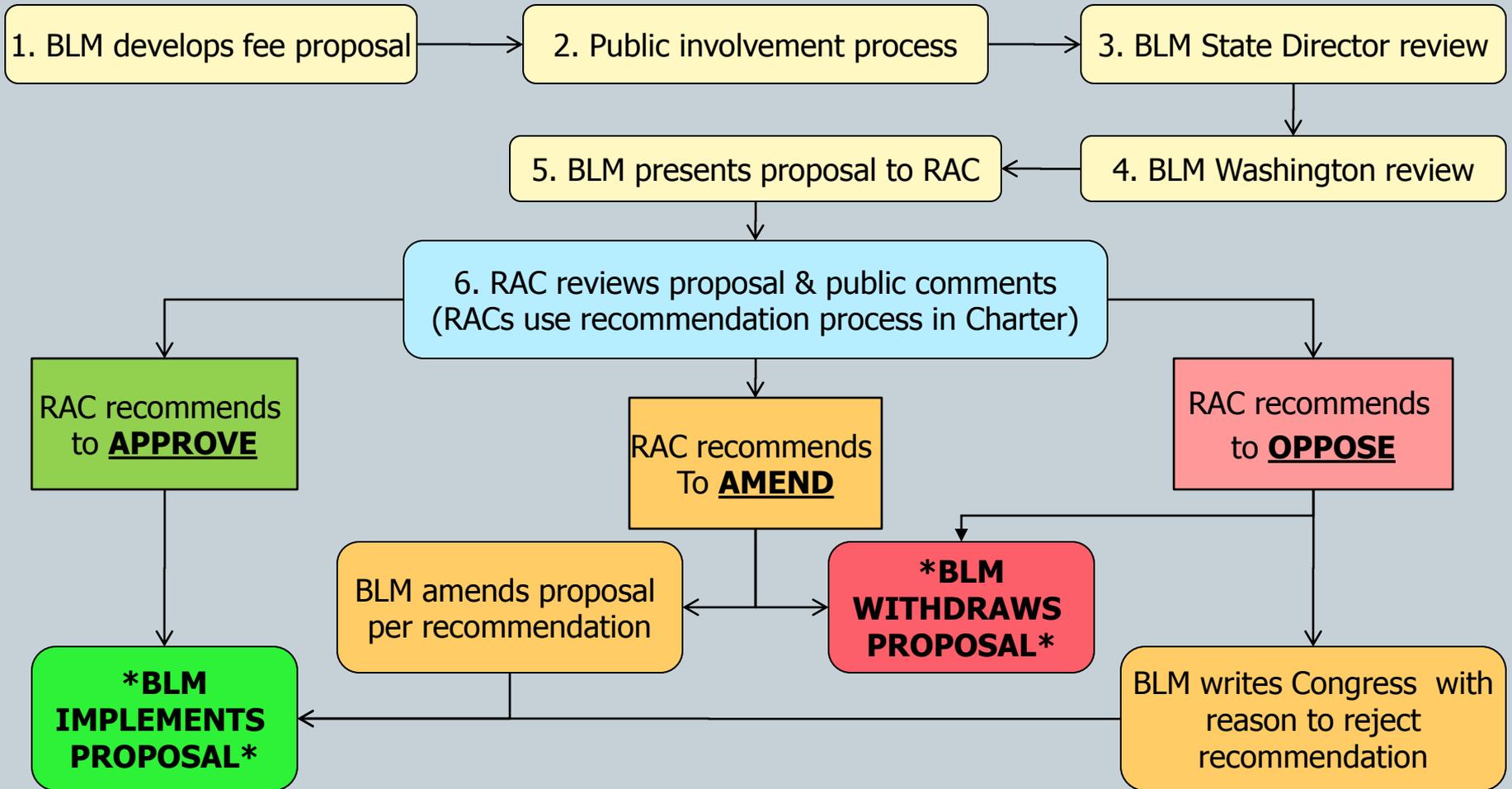
# Outcomes of RAC Recommendation



## If the RAC recommends:

- **Affirmation**, proposal can be implemented
- **Modifications** our State Director agrees to, proposal can be implemented (or withdrawn)
- **No affirmation**, our State Director must decide whether to withdraw or pursue proposal
  - If State Director wishes to pursue the proposal, BLM will issue REA-required written notification to Congress for rejecting recommendation (*very rare*)

# RAC Review Process



# BLM Fee Proponents



**The BLM proponents will:**

- **Comply with REA and agency rules**
- **Develop fee proposals**
- **Ensure public involvement**
- **Coordinate review**
- **Assist with public notification requirements**
- **Provide briefing on fee proposals to RAC**
- **If a new fee is approved, need to post in the FR and have a waiting period for at least 180 days**
- **Existing fee change, no Federal Register Notice is required**

# Fee Review Documents



**RACs will use RRAC forms:**

- **New Fee or Fee Change Proposal**
- **Summary of Public Involvement**
- **Fee Revenue Expenditure**
- **Non-Fee Revenue Expenditure**

**BLM fee proposals will include Business Plan**

# Business Plan



- **Background**
- **Project description**
- **Business rationale and justification**
- **Compliance with REA**
- **Financial analysis**
- **Market assessment of similar sites in region**
- **Social & economic impacts to users & community**
- **No action alternative**
- **Documentation of public participation**

# RAC Review & Recommendation



## **The RAC will:**

- **Schedule meetings**
- **Include fee proposals in the agenda**
- **Provide public notice of meetings**
- **Hear presentations from BLM fee proponents**
- **Hear public comments**
- **Approve a motion for a recommendation**
- **Provide any needed reports to comply with REA**
- **Provide public education about the RAC**

# RAC Review?



- **Does the proposed fee comply with REA?**
- **Is there adequate public support for the fee?**
- **Will the proposed fee benefit visitors?**
- **Will the proposed fee benefit communities?**
- **Is the proposed fee reasonable?**
- **Does the RAC recommend to affirm, modify, or not affirm the proposal?**

# Pending Fee Proposals



Field Office RAC	Fee Site Name	Fee Type	Existing or New Fee:	Fee Level & Proposed Increase
Grand Junction NW RAC	<b>North Fruita Desert</b> Campground	Expanded	New	\$7 – \$10 per campsite
Royal Gorge FR RAC	<b>Sand Gulch</b> Campground	Expanded	Existing	\$4 per site to \$10, Group Sites from \$8 to \$20
Royal Gorge FR RAC	<b>The Bank</b> Campground	Expanded	Existing	\$4 per site to \$11, Group Sites from \$8 to \$20
San Luis Valley FR RAC	<b>Zapata Falls</b> Campground	Expanded	New	\$11 per campsite, Group Sites \$20
San Luis Valley FR RAC	<b>Penitente</b> Campground	Expanded	Existing	\$5 per site to \$10, Group Sites from \$15 to \$20
Gunnison SW RAC	<b>Mill Creek</b> Campground	Expanded	Existing	\$7 to \$10; Per campsite
Gunnison SW RAC	<b>Oh Be Joyful</b> Campground	Expanded	New	\$5 per campsite

# Minimally, BLM Must Ensure...



- 80% percent of revenue is spent on site
- Revenues and expenses are accounted for
- Public notice and involvement occurs
- Reporting requirements are met

# Fee Must...



- Be balanced with visitor benefits and services
- Be comparable to fees charged nearby
- Not layer recreation fees (nickel & dime)
- Be used for at least 1 of:
  - Repair, maintenance & facility enhancement for visitor enjoyment, access, health and safety
  - Interpretation, information, service, needs assessments
  - Habitat restoration for wildlife-dependent recreation (hunting, fishing, observation or photography)
  - Law enforcement related to public use and recreation
  - Direct operating or capital costs for the fee program

# Fee Must Not Be For...



- General access to the area
- General entrance
- Dispersed areas with little BLM investment
- Driving, walking, boating, horseback riding or hiking through federal lands and waters without using the facilities and services
- Use of overlooks or scenic pullouts
- Travel over any road commonly used as a means of travel between two places

# Fee Must Not Be For...



- Access to private property
- Hunting or fishing
- Conduct of official business
- Special attention or services for the disabled
- Any person under 16 years old
- Outings for noncommercial educational purposes by schools

# Fee Must Not Be For...



- Any non-recreational activity permitted under any other Act, including valid grazing permits
- Biological monitoring on federal lands and waters under the Endangered Species Act
- Employee bonuses

# For more information



[http://www.blm.gov/publish/wo/en/prog/Recreation/recreation\\_national/recreation\\_fees\\_/recreation\\_racs/recreation\\_rac\\_org.html](http://www.blm.gov/publish/wo/en/prog/Recreation/recreation_national/recreation_fees_/recreation_racs/recreation_rac_org.html)

[http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/BLM\\_Programs/recreation/recfeeqa.html](http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/BLM_Programs/recreation/recfeeqa.html)

Jason Robertson, Branch Chief Social & Cultural Resources, 303-239-3731, [j2robert@blm.gov](mailto:j2robert@blm.gov)